

## MEMORANDUM

TO: CAP

FROM: Steering Committee

RE: Course Delivery Modes

DATE: April 7th, 2021

### **Background**

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, TCNJ shifted to remote and flex instruction, increasing faculty members' knowledge about and capacity to deliver courses in multiple instructional modes. The experience raises questions about whether the College's definitions of instructional modes capture current practices. Current definitions were last revised in 2018, prior to the college's integration of robust tools for synchronous web conferencing (such as Zoom and Google Meet). For online courses with a synchronous requirement, especially if part of an undergraduate student's day schedule, a synchronized meeting time introduces the need to find a suitable, quiet place to participate. Clarity on this delivery mode will help students make informed decisions as they build their schedules.

On April 1st, 2021, Judi Cook, Director of the Office of Instructional Design, sent a [memo](#) to Steering requesting that it charge CAP with reviewing definitions of instructional modes as outlined in the [Development and Approval of Online or Blended Courses policy](#) and recommending a series of revised definitions as a starting point.

### **Charge**

Steering charges CAP to review Director Cook's memo and revise the college's existing definitions of course delivery modes as described in the [Development and Approval of Online or Blended Courses policy](#). CAP should begin with Director Cook's definitions as a starting point. New definitions must distinguish between asynchronous and synchronous online options.

Once CAP has completed this work, CAP should prepare a preliminary recommendation for a revised policy and seek broad testimony from across the campus community, including, but not limited to: the Office of Instructional Design, Student Government, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate; Academic Leaders; the Council of Deans; and the Accessibility Resource Center.

### **Timeline**

CAP should begin work immediately on the charge. CAP should prepare a preliminary recommendation by May 12, 2021. CAP should then solicit campus testimony early in the fall 2021 semester, with the goal of making a final recommendation to Steering no later than October 13, 2021.

### **Testimony Tier: Tier II**

The issue requires moderate testimony from the campus community. The assigned council or committee should consult with relevant individuals and groups in developing a preliminary recommendation. The completed preliminary recommendation should then

be made available to the relevant stakeholder groups, and testimony should be solicited in the form of written feedback (through a survey and or e-mail).

## **TCNJ Governance Processes**

### *Step 1 – Steering issues a charge*

If Steering considers the issue appropriate for Governance, it will generate a charge and assign it to the appropriate committee or council. The charge will include:

- A clearly defined statement of the issue;
- A specific action that the committee or council should undertake;
- A list of individuals or groups with which the committee should consult in the development of a preliminary recommendation;
- The testimony tier (see page 27) that the committee or council should use in presenting the preliminary recommendation to the campus community;
- A suggested timeline for completing the charge.

Copies of all charges will be cc'd to the presidents of the three representative bodies. This will notify them that Governance is undertaking a new charge. It will also give them the opportunity to request that the testimony tier (see page 24) of the charge be changed. If such a request is made, it must be made within one week of receiving the charge.

### *Step 2 - Governance prepares a Preliminary Recommendation*

Once the appropriate standing committee or council has received the charge, it should start by collecting data needed to make a preliminary recommendation. It should receive input from affected individuals and all relevant stakeholder groups prior to making a preliminary recommendation. For issues that have broad implications or that affect a large number of individuals, initial testimony should be solicited from the campus community at large. For some issues, sufficient initial testimony may come from input through committee membership or solicitation from targeted constituent groups.

When, in the best judgment of the committee, adequate clarity of the principles contributing to the problem are known, a preliminary recommendation should be drafted and disseminated to the campus community.

### *Step 3 – The Relevant Stakeholders provide Testimony*

Once a preliminary recommendation has been completed, the standing committee or council should seek testimony from the campus community. The testimony should be gathered in accordance with the Testimony Tier (see page 27) assigned to the issue by Steering.

For issues that require public testimony from the campus community, the chair of the standing committee or council should approach the president of the appropriate representative bodies to schedule the next available time slot at a meeting of that body.

Testimony should be gathered in a way that allows stakeholders to weigh in fully on the issue. Members of the standing committee or council that wrote the preliminary recommendation should be present to hear and record the testimony.

#### *Step 4 – Governance prepares a Final Recommendation*

Once the standing committee or council has received appropriate testimony, it should revise the preliminary recommendation into a final recommendation. Once the final recommendation is complete, the standing committee or council should use sound judgment to determine whether or not more public testimony is required. If, in its feedback to the original preliminary recommendation, a stakeholder representative body requests to review an issue again, the committee or council is bound to bring it back to that body. If a full calendar year has passed since the formal announcement of the preliminary recommendation, the committee must resubmit a preliminary recommendation to the campus community.

When the committee or council has completed the final recommendation, it should forward it to the Steering Committee. The final recommendation should be accompanied by a cover memo that summarizes the initial charge, how testimony was gathered and the nature of that testimony, and how the committee responded to that testimony, including a description of how the preliminary recommendation evolved as a result of testimony.

#### *Step 5 – Steering considers the Final Recommendation*

Once Steering receives a final recommendation from a committee or council, it should consider whether or not the proper process has been followed. If it determines that the full process has been followed and that the recommendation is sound, it should approve the final recommendation and forward it to the provost.

If Steering decides that the process has not been followed, or that the recommendation is not sound, it should return the final recommendation to the appropriate committee or council and the charge should move back to Step 4.

#### *Step 6 – The Provost and/or President and Board consider the Final Recommendation*

The provost will consider the final recommendation and then accept it, accept it with minor revisions, accept it with major revisions, or reject it. In the case of acceptance, the final recommendation will either be sent to the next relevant individual for approval or will become policy, and will proceed to step 7.

If a final recommendation is rejected, or if changes are suggested, the provost will relay concerns and suggestions to Steering and the relevant committee or council chair. The steps listed under section X of this document – Governance Resolution – will then take place.

#### *Step 7 – Steering notifies the Campus Community*

Once an issue has been formally approved and has become policy, the provost will notify the faculty co-chair of the Steering Committee, who will in turn notify the campus community

through the appropriate means. This may include email, a notification on the Governance website, and/or email to the presidents of the stakeholder representative bodies.

*For a complete description of all steps and of the testimony tiers, see Governance Structures and Processes, 2019 Revision, pages 24-26*